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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4564
INFO RUCNASE/ASEAN MEMBER COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 0865
RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA 9640
RUEHKA/AMEMBASSY DHAKA 4151
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 1607
RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI 3332
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 6735
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO 4350
RUEHCI/AMCONSUL CALCUTTA 0740
RUEHCN/AMCONSUL CHENGDU 0741
RUDKIA/AMCONSUL CHIANG MAI 0389
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 2672
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 0316
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 RANGOON 000669

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STATE FOR EAP/MLS; PACOM FOR FPA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/15/2016

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [ECON](#) [PREL](#) [BM](#)

SUBJECT: NLD LEADERS TO MEET WITH GAMBARI, AND SUNDRY PARTY ISSUES

REF: A. RANGOON 648 (NOTAL)

[1](#)B. RANGOON 530

[1](#)C. 05 RANGOON 1332

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Classified By: P/E Chief W. Patrick Murphy for Reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#)1. (C) Summary: NLD leaders were scheduled to meet with UN U/SYG Gambari on May 19, but only learned of the meeting one day in advance--a likely reflection of the regime's desire to control the visit as closely as possible. On May 27, the NLD will commemorate its 1990 election victory, draw attention to the party's recent proposals for dialogue, and call for Aung San Suu Kyi's release. NLD leaders said that regime efforts "to belittle, sideline, and marginalize" the democratic opposition party are the extent of an official reply to their proposals for a political dialogue and transition. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (C) On May 16 P/E Chief and visiting Bangkok poloff called on NLD Central Executive Committee (CEC) members U Aung Shwe, U Lwin, and U Nyunt Wei. The party elders addressed a variety of recent developments and upcoming events:

--Visit of UN U/SYG Ibrahim Gambari: NLD Chairman U Aung Shwe said that neither the GOB nor UN representatives had approached the party about meeting the UN envoy during his May 18-20 visit to Burma. "We would very much appreciate seeing him," said Secretary U Lwin. The NLD leaders expressed disappointment that ASEAN envoy, Malaysian FM Hamid, had not consulted with them during his visit in March. We told the NLD leaders that the USG had communicated to Gambari our expectation that he would vigorously seek a meeting with Aung San Suu Kyi and, if that effort failed, he should meet with the NLD CEC.

--The NLD subsequently informed us that the party's seven Central Executive Committee (CEC) members would meet with Gambari on May 19. Authorities will escort the party leaders to the meeting, which was scheduled to take place at an official GOB guest house.

--NLD dialogue proposal: "Silence is not golden in Burma," said U Nyunt Wei, noting that the SPDC had not responded directly to the party's April proposal for dialogue and a political transition (ref B). He described the regime's recent treatment of the NLD--denigrating editorials and unfounded accusations of ties to exiled "terrorists"--was "clearly a reaction to our appeal for dialogue." He added that the GOB's attempts "to belittle, sideline, and marginalize the NLD is the extent of their reply." U Aung Shwe said that the NLD had sent copies of its dialogue proposals to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. "His response was pretty good," said U Aung Shwe, "We are encouraged by his hope that there could be positive developments by mid-year."

--NLD resignations: The NLD leaders were dismissive of press reports that claimed significant numbers of party members had resigned from the NLD in recent weeks. U Lwin said that many of the individuals the GOB had identified as quitting the party were, in fact, not actual members or had resigned many years ago. "The GOB has clearly coerced these individuals into claiming their intentions to resign," he said, "In any case, we have over a million members and the resignations are very small in number," adding that the GOB had forced the resignation of thousands of members in the 1990s.

--May 27: The NLD leaders said that the party would commemorate the 16th anniversary of its 1990 legislative election victory with a statement and a ceremony at party headquarters on May 27. They said they planned to address the NLD's dialogue proposals, the most recent of which

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suggested the SPDC respond by May 27, as well as the house arrest of Aung San Suu Kyi. The regime's current executive order for her detention expires on May 27 (ref C).

13. (S) The NLD leaders acknowledged that ASSK's personal physician had recently gained access to her for the first time in over two months (ref A). "We are confident that she is in good health, but we remain concerned about her well-being and her security," said U Aung Shwe.

14. (C) Comment: We were struck by the fact that, two days prior to the arrival of Gambari, local UN representatives had not approached the NLD leaders about a meeting. We suspect the UN country team fully appreciates the need for Gambari to consult in a meaningful manner with the democratic opposition, including the NLD. The last minute arrangements more likely reflect the regime's desire to control the visit.

Although Gambari met with his UN country team shortly after his April 18 arrival, the GOB is lodging him at an official guest house and scheduling many of his meetings for him (including a briefing for diplomats on May 20) at the same location. The regime will also fly Gambari to the new capital at Pyinmana on May 20 to meet with SPDC Chairman Than Shwe. End Comment.

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